CLAIMS

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method to obtain a medical record of a patient from a covered entity in a form allowing quick disclosure of said medical record to a third party without restriction by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, comprising:

    inducing said patient to obtain possession of a medical record of said patient from a covered entity;

    acquiring said medical record from said patient in a storage format; and

    storing said medical record in a memory in a form from which it can be reproduced in said storage format.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising inducing said patient to obtain possession of said medical record in a first format and inducing said patient to convert said medical record to said storage format, wherein said storage format is different from said first format.

3. The method of claim 1, further comprising obtaining the agreement of said patient to allow transmission of said medical record to a health care provider under defined conditions.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein said agreement is obtained before a defined condition arises.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein said memory is a portable medium.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein said portable medium is an optical disc.

7. The method of claim 1, further comprising retrieving said medical record stored in said memory remotely through a computer communications network.

8. The method of claim 1, further comprising inducing said patient to update said medical record stored in said memory.

9. The method of claim 1, further comprising inducing said patient to provide other information that is not a medical record, and storing said other information in said memory.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein said other information comprises information selected from the group consisting of a living will, investment portfolio, life insurance and a credit arrangement.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein said medical record is stored in a hierarchical storage system.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein said medical record is assigned to at least one file folder, said file folder containing medical records sharing at least one common attribute.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein said file folder is assigned to at least one file template, said file template containing file folders sharing at least one common attribute.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein a plurality of said file templates are stored in said storage system to form a general medical and personal information file of said patient.

15. The method of claim 12, wherein said file folder further comprises at least one subfolder.

16. The method of claim 11, wherein said hierarchical storage system provides hierarchical storage access.

17. The method of claim 14, wherein access to a special file template is on a different basis than access to at least one other file template.

18. The method of claim 17, wherein said special file template is an emergency file template.

19. A method to induce conversion of a medical record of a patient from a covered entity to a form allowing quick disclosure of said medical record to a third party without restriction by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, comprising:

    inducing said patient to obtain possession of a medical record of said patient from a covered entity;

    inducing said patient to convert said medical record into a storage format; and

    inducing said patient to store said medical record in a memory in said storage format.

20. The method of claim 19, further comprising providing said patient a system for converting said medical record into a storage format.

21. The method of claim 20, wherein said system is provided through a computer communications network.

22. The method of claim 20, wherein said system is provided in the form of software.

23. The method of claim 19, wherein said memory is a portable medium.

24. The method of claim 23, wherein said portable medium is an optical disc.

25. The method of claim 19, further comprising inducing said patient to update said medical record stored in said memory.

26. The method of claim 19, further comprising inducing said patient to obtain other information that is not a medical record, and to store said other information in said memory.

27. The method of claim 26, wherein said other information comprises information selected from the group consisting of a living will, investment portfolio, life insurance and a credit arrangement.

28. The method of claim 19, wherein said medical record is stored in a hierarchical storage system.

29. The method of claim 28, wherein said hierarchical storage system provides hierarchical storage access.

30. A medical and personal information system for obtaining and storing a medical record of a patient from a covered entity in a form allowing quick disclosure of said medical record to a third party without restriction by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, comprising:

   a communication interface adapted for inducing said patient to obtain possession of a medical record of said patient from a covered entity; and

   a data storage device comprising a memory adapted for storing said medical record in a form from which it can be reproduced in a storage format.

31. The system of claim 30, wherein said communication interface is adapted to induce said patient to obtain possession of said medical record in a first format and to induce

said patient to convert said medical record to said storage format, wherein said storage format is different from said first format.

32. The system of claim 30, wherein said communication interface is adapted for acquiring said medical record from said patient in said storage format.

33. The system of claim 30, wherein said communication interface is adapted to obtain the agreement of said patient to allow transmission of said medical record to a health care provider under defined conditions.

34. The system of claim 33, wherein communication interface is adapted to obtain said agreement before a defined condition arises.

35. The system of claim 30, wherein said memory is a portable medium.

36. The system of claim 35, wherein said portable medium is an optical disc.

37. The system of claim 30, wherein said communication interface and said data storage device are operatively connected to enable said medical record stored in said memory to be retrieved remotely through a computer communications network.

38. The system of claim 30, wherein said memory is adapted to a hierarchical storage system.

39. The system of claim 38, wherein said hierarchical storage system comprises a general medical information file of said patient.

40. The system of claim 39, wherein said general medical information file comprises a file template.

41. The system of claim 40, wherein said file template comprises a file folder.

42. The system of claim 41, wherein said file folder comprises a sub-folder.

43. The system of claim 38, wherein said data storage device provides hierarchical storage access.

44. The system of claim 40, wherein said general medical information file comprising a special file template accessed on a different basis from said general medical information file.

45. The system of claim 44, wherein said special file template is an emergency file template.

46. The system of claim 44, wherein said special file template is stored in a first memory and said general medical information file is stored in a second memory wherein said first and second memories are different optical discs.

47. The system of claim 30, wherein said memory is adapted for storing other information of the patient that is not a medical record.

48. The system of claim 47, wherein said other information comprises information selected from the group consisting of a living will, an investment portfolio record, a life insurance record and a credit arrangement.

49. The system of claim 30, wherein said communication interface is adapted to induce said patient to update said medical record stored in said memory.